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Address of Hon. Frederick Holbrook,

AT THE VERMONT STATE FAIR, MIDDLEBURY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1851.

Gentlemen of the Vermont State Fair:

When I received the invitation from your Committee of Arrangements to address you on this occasion, I felt such an entire distrust of my powers and qualifications for the proper performance of the duty, as almost to induce me to decline the honor at once. When I considered that a highly respectable and intelligent audience would here be gathered; that it would be desirable to give such a tone and direction to this volunteer and preliminary movement of the farmers of Vermont as to lead to a permanent organization for the encouragement and improvement of the agriculture of the State; that a high standard of excellence would therefore very properly be required from the person who should stand in this place this day; that my course of life had never given me the slightest training for the preparation and delivery of public addresses; I doubted whether it would be possible for me to do justice to your cause, to satisfy you, or even myself. On the other hand, I considered that the Improvements of Agriculture claimed, and that I had long since determined they should receive, the best thoughts and efforts of my life; that I had been invited to this task by men whom I highly esteem as citizens, and for their zeal and efficient efforts for the promotion of the cause which interests me so deeply; and it therefore seemed to me to be my duty to *attempt* the service to which I had been called.

The venerable Socrates said: "Agriculture is an employment the most worthy the application of man, the most ancient and the most suitable to his nature; it is the common nurse of all persons, in every age and condition of life; it is the source of health, strength, plenty and riches, and of a thousand sober delights and honest pleasures, it is the mistress and school of sobriety, temperance, justice, religion, and, in short, of all virtues." That it 'is an employment the most worthy the application of man, the most ancient, and the most suitable to his nature,' we may learn from his earliest history. On the sixth day of the Creation, after form had been given to matter, and the vegetable and lower animal world had been brought forth to life,

"There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature who, not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing."

Man, the chief of all God's works, was then made, and commanded to subdue and cultivate the ground. Thus early did the Creator assign his most important pursuit; and from thence alone, we may infer its suitableness to his nature, and its superior dignity. Ever since that ancient period, the earth has been the common mother of us all, feeding all. The productions of its surface and the treasures of its interior are the great materials in Commerce and Manufactures, the grand elements impelling the labors and enterprises of nearly universal man. The cultivation of the earth is 'the source of health and strength' in a degree superior to most of the other pursuits of man; and that 'it is the source of a thousand sober delights and honest pleasures' has passed to proverb. Numbers of the purest, wisest, greatest and best of men, after years of active toil and usefulness, after wearing the highest honors earth could bestow, have retired to the farm, and there realized the sentiment of Socrates. To prove that 'it is the mistress and school of sobriety, temperance, justice and religion,' we need not go beyond our own times and country. Compare the habits and morals of the inhabitors of our rural districts, with those of the masses in our cities and large towns, and we find the former have very much the advantage. Then, too, it is notable that quite a majority of the men who lead in the great business operations of the day, who conduct the affairs of state, and who minister to us in religion, received their early training upon the farm, away from the tainting influences which breed among masses of men, where the physical frame became expanded, strengthened, and fitted for the toils of later life, where frugal, sober, temperate habits and sound morals became fixed characteristics.

When we correctly consider the antiquity, the dignity, the importance, and the thousand sober delights and honest pleasures of Agriculture, and then look abroad in our country and see to what an extent it has been neglected, and by how many it has even been despised, we are led to enquire how this can be. We are not long, however, in finding the reason. A large portion of our farmers have been decidedly, absolutely opposed to all innovations or improvements in their business. There have always been honorable exceptions to this in every district; but still the remark is too true, when applied to the mass. It has been contended that the farmer should simply follow old ways, guide his operations by the traditions of his fathers, without regard to new times and changed circumstances; that there is nothing for him to learn by experiment or by study; that the best farmer is he who can plow the greatest breadth of land in a day, mow the most grass or hoe the most corn,—the man who can contrive to get the most out of mother earth without returning her an equivalent. It mattered not, with such, if he did sap fertility entirely out of her, provided he made money while doing it. It was no matter what became of the fertility of the land, there was enough more that might be served in the same way; and as for the generations that were to succeed him, they might take care of themselves. Under the operation of these views and practices, it has taken less than a half century to wear out the lands of the older states of our country, to run them down so low as to make their further profitable cultivation for some time to come quite a difficult and discouraging work, a work of great skill and patience. It was no part of this kind of farming to stop and enquire how the land already possessed could be improved, or kept stationary; acre must be added to acre, (often times more than could ever be paid for,) only to be worn out as previous acres had been.

Then, too, it has proved little else than an unmitigated curse to our Agriculture, that such numbers of the intelligent enterprising young men of the country have forsaken the farm for other pursuits. It was quite natural, however, that they should do so; for the fact cannot be disguised, that the community have quite generally considered the young man who remained upon the farm as rather wanting in intelligence and enterprise; that anybody, no matter how ignorant, if he only had "the hard days-works in him," would do to conduct the farm, while the promising young men must leave it, go through a long and severe apprenticeship, a training as rigid as military discipline, a systematic course of instruction; in short, must be thoroughly educated, to fit them for other callings, more dignified, more important, more worthy the attention of man, than farming. Our young men have too often seen prejudice usurping the place of reason, and mere tradition that of actual knowledge,—have been taught that the huge hand of labor is the whole of farming; that it is a mistake, a ridiculous mistake, to attempt to enlighten, direct or assist its toils by cultivated mind,—by the exercise of those high and noble faculties with which the Creator endowed man, and which, rightly improved and used, elevate him so far above all sublunary things.

But different sentiments are now becoming prevalent in the community regarding the real practical dignity and importance of the farmer's calling, and the absolute necessity of education, of scientific knowledge, for a proper, and the most profitable prosecution of that calling. While it is universally admitted that to exhaust the fertility of the most prolific soil requires no science and but little art,—the process simply being to carry off all it will give you and put nothing back,—many now insist that to restore a soil thus worn out to its original vigor; to induce it to yield those bountiful and, to the old class farmers, astonishing harvests which it is able and willing to give back to a liberal and enlightened cultivation, does require a high degree of both science and art. It is further asserted that the native dignity of the farmer's calling, his interest as a man of business, his duty as a man, as a citizen living under the operation of free institutions, and the welfare of his country, all demand of him that he be a man of intellectual cultivation, a man of knowledge. Let us examine these sentiments a little, and see if they are correct, and safe to be promulgated.

That 'sanctity of reason' with which man was originally endued, is precisely the faculty which gives him superiority over all other creatures, enabling him to govern them, 'self-knowing,' and, among other things, properly to subdue and cultivate the earth. By it he devises means to accomplish his ends, distinguishes truth from error, or acquires knowledge. It is a progressive faculty; and in proportion as we rightly exercise it in the acquisition of knowledge, so, in turn, do we enlarge and strengthen it, thus enabling ourselves to make higher and still higher attainments.

Knowledge expands the mind and exalts all the faculties of the farmer, so that, from an ignorant being, exclusively confined to mere details and the toils of merely physical labor, he comes to discern and take a comprehensive view of great general principles, and to reason from cause to effect. His calling brings him into intimate contact with nature; the more he observes, studies and understands her operations and principles, the better is he fitted to conduct his business profitably and pleasantly, the more will he appreciate the dignity of his calling, the higher will be his rank and influence among men. If his powers of observation, reflection and comparison are quickened and exalted by knowledge, he will find every walk over his fields the pleasanter for it; the labors of his hand will be lightened, cheered, directed and made efficient by the workings of his mind. He will be a thinking, reasoning man, will have power to compare, contrive, invent, improve and perfect,—to accomplish results entirely beyond the attainment of the ignorant, prejudiced, traditionary farmer. The more his faculties are expanded and exalted by knowledge, the larger will be the fields which his business will open up to him for observation, study and thought; and the more will he become convinced that farming, instead of being a mere piece of drudgery, for ignorant physical labor to conduct, is equal to taxing the efforts of the richest intellect; that nature, in connection with his calling, can give employment and pleasure to earth's choicest spirits.

The farmer who has made a beginning in reading and observation, will be surprised to find how many subjects for further inquiry and thought exist in the commonest operations of husbandry. One of his first inquiries will be whether his farm-implements are the best adapted to lighten labor, work the land and harvest the crops efficiently; and if not, he will be apt to understand their imperfections and call for better ones; and if the manufacturer has not yet produced them, the new demand will prompt him to do so; and perhaps in a conversation with this improving farmer, he will gain ideas and suggestions of practical importance in his business of manufacture.

When the inquiring thinking farmer is about to plow and prepare his land for a crop, he will consider that a thorough inversion and pulverization of the soil is one of the conditions his crop requires for its greatest prefection. Wide, shallow furrows, turned hurriedly and imperfectly, will therefore not satisfy him; but he will see that his land is nicely plowed, in deep, narrow furrows, so that the roots of his crop may strike deep and expand widely, without obstruction. If the crop to be put upon the land be corn, for instance, he will consider it better to manure & cultivate five acres thoroughly, than ten or twenty acres superficially. He will mingle the manure intimately with the soil, and reduce the surface to a fine mellow tilth before ever a seed is deposited in the ground, that being the best time do it cheaply and expeditiously, and the most favorable condition for the crop to come forward rapidly and vigorously in the early stage of its growth, overtop the weeds, and get beyond the depredations of insects. So of all other crops.

It will be a subject of deep study and thought with him, how he may increase his materials for fertilizing his soil. Every waste vegetable substance, the muck from his low lands and marshes, every thing that is reasonably available for increasing his compost-heaps, for improving his land and for feeding his crops, will be appropriated. Nothing about his buildings that will contribute to this purpose will be suffered to run waste; his fixtures will be calculated to save every enriching material, the yearly accumulation of compost under such management will be large and abundant, his crops will increase, his barns grow larger, and his purse heavier. He will study to adapt his composts to his soil and his crop, and his crop to his soil; and this will lead to a study of the composition and characteristics of different soils. He will perhaps find that his own farm has different soils; and if so, he will be led to mix them more or less, finding it the cheapest and most profitable kind of manuring to a certain extent, and that the defects or superfluities of each are thereby corrected. He will be particular in his inquiries as to the rotation of crops for his land and markets, and for getting the largest returns for his investments, without unduly exhausting the land. He will understand the theory and advantages of plowing-in green crops, and if they will be profitable in his condition and mode of husbandry, he will avail himself of them. If he owns wet lands, where wild unprofitable bushes and grapes grow, and where it is an object to raise hay to sell or feed to his own stock in winter, he will inquire as to the cheapest and best mode of draining it, of letting in the warmth of the sun and the influences of the atmosphere, of changing its texture, composition and herbage; and in a few years, a smiling meadow, yielding great crops of hay, will succeed the gloomy, unwholesome, unprofitable morass.

He will not fail to observe the wonderful effects of irrigation, where small springs gush from the hill-side, or temporary brooks flow over mowings and pastures. If he consults the writings of men on this subject, he will find that this artificial watering of the ground is largely practiced, with profitable results, in his own country and abroad; that even under the clouded sky and in the humid climate of Great Britain, irrigation is employed on a grand scale. If he is a Vermont farmer, he will not fail to observe that great natural facilities exist for the cheap and profitable employment of irrigation, whether by damming streams and spreading their waters over the intervals adjoining, or by bottling up temporary waters among the hills in early spring, and afterwards conducting them to hill-sides and spreading them along down the slopes. The most correct and advantageous method of gaining the control of the waters, and the proper use of them upon the land, will be matter of investigation and thought.

The observing, thinking Vermont farmer will notice the great want of discrimination in clearing off the forests of the State; that many steep hill-sides are bared, subject to an annual loss of the better portions of their surface by heavy washings, and have become, or are rapidly becoming valueless in production; that much rough land, inaccessible to cultivation or improvement, has been swept of its forest, and of its natural covering of vegetable mould by fire, and of course of its only power of valuable production. He will enquire, therefore, how he can place these lands in a gradual course of improvement; for he will ascertain by computation that if they had been simply chopped over once in twenty to thirty years without putting fire to them, and exhausting them with grain crops, and had been permitted to grow timber and fuel again, they would have been much more productive, and have rendered individual estates more valuable to sell or to keep. He will also understand that the various railroads now in operation in the State are making heavy demands upon the fuel and timber of our forests, that they offer fine facilities for the transport of valuable lumber and stuff for turning and other manufacturing purposes, to markets out of the State; and that these are strong additional reasons why the wood-lots now existing should be well cared for, and why lands unprofitable for other production should be placed in a way to grow wood and timber.

These railroads will speedily and safely transport to distant markets, even the most perishable products of the Vermont farmer. He who is ready for changes and improvements, will therefore inquire what new or different products he may raise to advantage for the new and different markets now opened to him. Among other articles which will strike him as susceptible of extensive cultivation, fruit will be prominent. If he is about to plant an orchard of the apple, he will inquire what varieties will be best adapted to his soil and location; for he will be apprised of the fact that, of several choice varieties, some one, two or three of them may be vastly more productive and profitable in his soil and climate than the remainder. He will inquire into the best methods of cultivating the land, of pruning and training the trees, the nature and habits of insects injurious to the apple, and the most effective means to exterminate them, or hinder their ravages. So of all other fruits.

Vermonters appreciate the great value to their State of the Morgan horse, whether as an animal for sale or for home service. It is an inquiry of deep interest to our farmers how he may be preserved in purity, how size, vigor and action may be kept up, and how he may perhaps even be improved. It will not do to leave this matter in ignorant hands The philosophy and principles of breeding and crossing must be studied, with much observation and reflection. The experience of other parts of the world in breeding the horse must be made familiar, mistaken practices avoided, and correct ones copied. This is the legitimate business of the intelligent farmer.

Of the thorough-bred cattle now attracting the attention of our farmers, which breed or breeds, all things considered, are best adapted to the latitude and soil of Vermont, and the purposes of her farmers? After an intelligent decision upon this question, and the animals are among us, then comes the question,—How are they to be preserved in full excellence? And again,—since there is no end to improvement in the business of breeding agricultural animals,—How may even these choice breeds be improved? These are great questions, affecting the wealth and prosperity of the State, and require much observation and intelligence, for a correct decision.

Vermont has for several years been justly celebrated for her valuable flocks of Sheep. Within the last two or three years some of her enterprising farmers have searched the most noted sheep districts of Europe, and made importations from their best flocks. We have now equal facilities with the most favored for the production of the finest and most valuable fleece of wool. Starting upon this high vantage-ground, we must at least keep pace with the most skilful, and get ahead if we can. But to do this, will require science, knowledge, skill. Our wool-growers must be thoroughly posted, in every particular, in the breeding and management of sheep. Whims and notions will not do; the real science, the accumulated wisdom of the past and present, must be familiar to them.

These practical details are sufficient to show us that the subjects for inquiry are very various and important, involving the principles of several distinct sciences, and that the expanding and exalting influences of knowledge upon the farmer's mind have a directly practical bearing upon him as a man of business, enabling him to get at the very principles which lie at the foundation of a proper and profitable cultivation of the earth. But there are other advantages, of a still nobler sort, arising from the attainment of knowledge.

Knowledge *refines* the mind of the farmer, thus enabling him to perceive and enjoy the beauties and sublimities of nature. It is his high privilege, in the prosecution of his daily business, to come in contact with nature, and to study her laws. The more his mind rises to a perception of the works of Deity, the more will it be filled with astonishment and delight at their minuteness and comprehensiveness, their beauty and grandeur, and so far as he can follow them, the exact laws that regulate and control all animate and inanimate nature. The more he investigates, the more will he perceive that the meanest of those works is inexhaustible. They constantly solicit his senses, and the more he observes, the more pressingly they invite him to contemplate their great Author.

The life of the farmer is favorable to the acquisition of knowledge, and its acquisition will contribute to his happiness. Away from the strifes, excitements, and busy din of populous places, he has many leisure hours which he ought to devote to reading and calm reflection. Then, too, his daily pursuits, calling him into the pure and exhilarating air of heaven, with the principles and beauties of nature all around him, are of health-giving, and may be of mind-inspiring tendency; and while his hands are busily engaged in the labors of the field, his mind, it expanded by cultivation, may be pursuing trains of thought with an elasticity and vigor, which men of sedentary employments often sigh for in vain. And again, the various natural sciences are so intimately connected with his business, as almost to *provoke* him to a knowledge of them, to read while he runs, to understand though wayfaring. If a taste for reading and the attainment of knowledge is once acquired, it will probably become confirmed into a habit for life, affording more and more enjoyment as life advances; and if old age arrives, with the infirmities and confinement incident to that period, this habit, with its attendant, reflection, will then prove an unfailing and inestimable source of pleasure.

No one should be hindered from entering upon the pursuit of knowledge under an impression that it is too expensive, and involves too much time. Good books, and an hour at a time devoted to them, will do wonders for one in the course of a year. Besides, the thorough sifting of what we do read, by mature reflections of our own, is the kind of reading that gives us both knowledge and wisdom,—that gives us useful ideas, and wisdom in the application of them. There may be too much, as well as too little reading,—reading that crowds the mind with a crude, heterogeneous mass of ideas, without the power of using them practically, efficiently, usefully.

"Knowledge and Wisdom, far from being one,
Have oft-time no connexion. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which Wisdom builds,
Till smooth'd, and squar'd, and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems t' enrich."

As a religious being, man should receive the advantages of education. It is true that Christianity extends its invitations to all men, and so compassionately announces them, that the most illiterate may comprehend their essential terms; but it is also true that it addresses the understanding as well as the heart; that its evidences, its hopes, and its sublime faith, call forth the whole intellectual power. It teaches us that the mind of man will endure, after all these material things have crumbled and perished; that it is fitted for constant growth and progress in knowledge here, and for an eternal progression hereafter,—that it may forever stretch forth its tireless energies to understand the Creator as he is. Surely, then, if, considering man in all his other aspects, we could by possibility conclude to dispense with the advantages of mental cultivation, yet, when we think of the dignity and grandeur with which the doctrine of immortality invests his mind, we must wish to see that mind expanded, exalted and refined by knowledge, that he may the better understand his duties and his destiny.

Our farmers should be well educated, because thereby they will be enabled to contribute most powerfully to the prosperity and continued welfare of the Country. In numbers, they make up more than three-fourths of its population. The territory they inhabit, or are in process of occupying, embraces almost every variety of soil and climate, and is capable of growing, to a vast extent, almost every known production. But the quantity and quality of these productions of our soil will be in proportion to the science and skill of its cultivators; and since those productions are the grand elements impelling the labors and enterprises of nearly all the people, we see that the substantial prosperity of the country, its high advancement in civilization and the arts of life, is closely connected with the amount of scientific knowledge and skill possessed by the tillers of the soil,—that it cannot advance in prosperity much beyond the advancement of its agriculture. But again, we live under the benign operation of a free government, whose foundation rests, and can only securely stand upon the intelligence and virtue of the people. Obviously, a state of ignorance, with its usual attendants, indolence and vice, cannot be compatible with the existence of free institutions. As citizens of a Republic, then, we should be possessed of that knowledge and virtue which will enable us to rule our own spirits. We are called upon to enact laws, to discharge the duties of the elective franchise, to take part in the administration of justice, and to fill the various official trusts of state. The laws contemplate our fitness to discharge these various duties and trusts, under the guidance of independent opinions of our own, and with a just sense of individual responsibility. No other conditions can be safely substituted for these. Now if our yeomanry be well educated, they will be likely to be industrious, independent and virtuous; if they are advancing in education, and a scientific knowledge of agriculture, they will be improving their soils, adorning their estates, and creating an attractive, happy, rural home, which begets a love of country; if guided by knowledge and virtue, they will understand their rights and their duties, and will prize and maintain their richest earthly blessing; and if intemperate excitements, and unwise and unsafe zeal for party, and temptations to ambitious men to overstep the bounds of propriety, occur to cloud the political horizon, such a rural population, bred to plain and pure republican habits, and under the guidance of a sensible, temperate and stable conservatism, will ensure the safety of these free institutions, and perpetuity to the rich blessings they bring.

I have thus endeavored to enumerate what appear to me to be some of the reasons why our farmers should be well educated. I cannot doubt but the intelligent men whom I see around me are all ready to carry forward any measures which will bring about this happy condition of things. What, then, are some of the agencies now operating, and which must be put in operation, to establish a higher state of knowledge among the cultivators of the soil, and secure the great advantages attendant thereon?

Obviously, the first agency to be named, is the agricultural press. This has been too long in operation, and the beneficial influences shed all around by it are too palpable to observation, to require any extended remarks.

Allusion has already been made to a class of intelligent thinking men, scattered along in every district, who are apprised of the dignity and importance of agriculture, who deeply feel the necessity and value of scientific knowledge as applied to the cultivation of the earth, and who by precept and by their own shining example are illustrating the same,—causing once worn out lands to produce abundant harvests. Their influence is most valuable; their ardor must not be damped; they must be encouraged and assisted in their efforts to promote agricultural improvement, by every well wisher to such improvement.

The time has come when the foundations of a systematic agricultural education should be laid, so that the generation of farmers who are to succeed us may have the opportunity to become well-versed in science as applied to the cultivation of the soil. The researches now being made in Agricultural Chemistry, and Geology as applied to Agriculture, are extremely interesting and important, and they are opening up to us a new world in the science of agricultural production. Agricultural Schools are in successful operation in several of the European States; their establishment in our own country is loudly called for; enquiries are now in progress amongst us as to how they shall be planted and conducted; they must, and they surely will be established; their utility will be highly extolled; they will prove nurseries of republican virtues, and sure guarantees of the agricultural advancement, and the general prosperity of our country. Professorships of Agriculture are already being established in our colleges, and their labors are opening with high promise of usefulness and success. They offer the very best opportunities to young men to fit themselves for usefulness and distinction. If agriculture is to be taught as a science in schools, it is obvious that we must raise up the men to teach it professionally and ably; and this must be the business of the agricultural professorships in our Colleges. Vermont has two Colleges, which are fitting men for the clerical, legal, medical, and for literary professions, many of whom are distinguished ornaments in society, and more of whom give high promise of distinction. Shall not these colleges fit men for the noble profession of agriculture? Shall they not be provided with agricultural departments, teaching the principles and the correct practice of cultivation, and fitting young men to go forth and teach the same professionally to others? Believe me, Vermonters, here is a movement worthy your immediate and high regard. Enter at once upon it, carry it to a successful completion, and you will endow your Colleges with power to fertilize your soil like rain from heaven. If any farmers present have sons desiring finished educations to fit them for professional life, I would say to them, let your sons prepare themselves to teach professionally the scientific principles of agriculture. They will thus fit themselves for great usefulness, and they will find abundant employment for their profession.

A Bureau of Agriculture, established in the Deparment of the Interior at Washington, "charged with collecting and diffusing information, and enabled by premiums and small pecuniary aid to encourage and assist a spirit of discovery and improvement, by stimulating to enterprise and experiment, and by drawing to a common centre the results, every where, of individual skill and observation, and by spreading them thence over the whole nation," would prove a "very cheap instrument of immense national benefits." These are the words of our revered Washington. Vermonters are familiar with this subject, and need no instruction upon it. We wait patiently for its organization, and are willing that all reasonable time be taken to mature it and give it life. But the people have a right to demand this Bureau, and the politicians have no right to refuse it. Let the wishes of those friendly to the promotion of agriculture and the highest prosperity of the country, be so made known that they cannot be misunderstood.

And now, Farmers of Vermont, what is our principal object in coming together on this occasion? Is it not to become better acquainted with each other, and to form ourselves into a permanent organization for our own mutual benefit and improvement, and for the advancement of the agriculture of the State? Dr. Brewster, in enumerating the advantages which had resulted from the establishment of the British Board of Agriculture, remarks that—"Before the Board was instituted, the bond of connexion among agriculturists was slender, and served few useful purposes. Each trusted to his own information, and knew little more about the practice of conterminous districts, than those of China or the most distant country. The establishment of the Board removed at once all these evils and difficulties. It made farmers, who resided in the most distant quarters of the kingdom, acquainted with one another, and caused a rapid dissemination of knowledge among the whole profession. The art of agriculture was brought into fashion; old practices were amended; new ones introduced, and a degree of exertion manifested, which had never before been exemplified in this island." All history teaches us, that it is of the first importance in the accomplishment of great objects of improvement, to collect men together, and bind them in an association for that purpose. A State association for the improvement of our agriculture, will bring the intellect of the State to a most powerful bearing upon that subject. Thus collected and organized, we shall see and hear and learn new things, and learn them in such a manner as to make an indelible impression, and to exert a practical influence. Instead of resting upon ways as good as any in our immediate neighborhoods, we shall compare ourselves more extensively with others, and improve accordingly. An enthusiastic zeal will be awakened useful knowledge in all departments of husbandry will be scattered broadcast over the State, our farms will be made more valuable, our homes more pleasant and comfortable, and our income more abundant.

Farmers of Vermont, let us organise ourselves into a State association at once. While we are reaping rich benefits by concerted action, we will also counsel together as to the best measures to be adopted for laying deep and strong the foundations of thorough agricultural education in our State; so that our sons may be wiser, stronger men than ourselves, and fill places which we cannot occupy. This is benevolence; this is interest; this is patriotism.

For the Middlebury Register.

Ought we to Support the Institutions of our own Town in preference to those of Another? A Case in point.

NO. 3.

In one of those truly picturesque and beautiful towns in the valley of Lake Champlain, resides a young and active merchant. The town skirts the margin of the Lake, and is one of the finest farming towns bordering its pebbled shore. The land is fertile, and, with proper culture, highly productive. The morals of the town are good, and hence the inhabitants are industrious. The farmers are intelligent and wealthy, and many have become capitalists. It has good schoolhouses, two costly buildings for public worship, an Academy of learning, and the town is dotted all over with good farm residences, mostly painted white. In short, in many respects it is a model town. The young merchant was born, educated, and reared among them. For consistency of character he stands unimpeached. After receiving a primary education, he engaged as a clerk with one of the old merchants of the town, (who, sharing the fate of most who engage in the hazardous schemes of mercantile life, has failed). He was attentive to business, pleasing and courteous to customers, and generally won their esteem and friendship.

After devoting years, and the best part of his early life, to acquire a competent knowledge of mercantile pursuits, he was encouraged to open a store for himself. Having, but a small capital, except a good character, many entertained fears that his race would be short; but, possessed of an uncommon degree of caution and prudence, he has passed the ordeal and yet lives, and, to say the least, has for the last few years been making a small gain, over the contingent expenses of his business and family. As a financier he deserves credit, and for integrity and honorable deal he maintains an enviable distinction.

Has not this young man a high and exalted claim upon the patronage of his townsmen and neighbors? Would they do right to desert him? Does not the great law of love bind them to continue their support? Can they be justified in turning their backs upon him without cause? Nay, verily, they are bound by every principle of honor and of morals, to do unto him, as they would wish him to do to them in like circumstances. He has spent all his early life, to fit himself for the business, and has invested all he is worth in the same. Shall he now be deserted and left to sink, is a question, for christians and moralists to answer.

Within the last two or three years there has been an extraneous movement among farmers. They have in many places taken it into their heads, that the mercantile interest would be better managed in their hands. Consequently they have concluded to kill off their former merchants, and set up trade among themselves. So they have organized, or rather disorganized, and formed what they are pleased to term *Protective Union Stores.* The name is a misnomer. They might with greater propriety be styled *disunion stores*, for in many places they have conducted so, that there appears among them the very absence of all union or friendship. This movement is evidently the fruit of a selfish and suicidal policy, as well as of a disordered brain. It is the result of the enlarged notions of liberty, which naturally vegetate and grow under a republican form of government. It is, however, of a mushroom growth, and will soon come to naught. Like Jonah's gourd, it will wither and perish before the searching sun-rays of truthful experience.

In this beautiful town, among these rich farmers, amidst luxuriance and plenty, reside a squad of these enthusiasts for reform. They are represented as being in many respects very clever fellows—quite moral—rest one day in seven and sometimes two, never take over 12 or 14 per cent. interest, and always give good measure when any one is looking on. 'Tis true, many of them are rich, but as riches seldom tend to satisfy, they are egregiously anxious for more, so they have come to the grave and sober conclusion, to join hands and rob others of their honest calling, and ruin or themselves immortal. Some, it is reported, are already heartily sick of their connexion, and wish themselves out of the company, fearing that in the end they shall meet with a loss, as they most assuredly will, for it is a law both natural and revealed that "though hand join in hand the wicked shall not go unpunished." The young merchant has a few staunch friends, who not only stand by him in this Judas-like conduct, but who look down upon such selfish and traitorous acts with contempt and scorn. It is considered as a gross dereliction from the paths of duty, and their checks ought to mantle with shame and self-contempt when they reflect upon the injustice they are perpetrating upon the rights of this young man. The sooner they repent and return to that allegiance from which they broke away, the better.

Good authority affirms, that recently one of these so-called *protective stores* failed for the very moderate amount of $8,000. This is protection with a vengeance. Quite a number have met with smaller losses, and it is believed by all good judges in such matters that none can wind up and get out of the business without similar results. Cunning and designing men in the cities, employed as agents, are reaping large profits from these operations. It is stated that importers and jobbers offer to make a discount of several per cent., some more and some less, as they can agree, to those agents to secure their patronage, all of which they get